

Washington, D. C. 20505

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Dear

I truly appreciate your taking the time to set down for me your summary views of the Collection Tasking Staff. I value them because of your extensive experience in the world of collection and because you have seen features of the organization that many of us miss in the press of everyday business.

As you probably know, the inspiration for the Collection Tasking Staff came largely from the Shaba crisis of March 1977. I found myself hamstrung in trying to coordinate the different agencies that were conducting photography and the different ones that were conducting SIGINT during that event. Beyond that, the only mechanism I had for attempting that was the morning staff conference at the Agency. In retrospect, perhaps the real problem was that the Deputy for the Intelligence Community did not, I believe, really see collection tasking as a major responsibility. You all, at the three disciplined committees, were an echelon away. As you know, we had conflicting and uncoordinated photographic efforts between three different organizations, none of whom were talking to each other. It is also my recollection that the two different organizations conducting SIGINT did not communicate with each other. I was particularly struck by all this when we tried to phase down to normal on the conclusion of the exercise. No one was thinking in terms of what the total SIGINT or the total photographic effort needed to be and then trying to decide which agency could best fulfill that while the others phased out. It appeared to me everybody wanted to stay in the act as long as possible because maybe they'd get some glory if things popped up again.

Admittedly, those problems were not cross-discipline, a point which you bring out in your letter as one that Frank and I may have overstressed. Let me say, however, that in stressing cross-discipline tasking I have never been very concerned about economies of resources that might result. I agree with you that's unlikely. My hope through looking at all disciplines that might apply to a given problem is to uncover ways in which one discipline or another might be better utilized. In short, I have had concerns as to whether, when a collection problem arises, those doing the tasking in fact look at all of the resources that might be made available. Perhaps I have gained too shallow an impression, but I have had the thought that in some instances

we turned largely to SIGINT because the analysts concerned had had good results with SIGINT before and in other cases we turned more exclusively to PHOTINT for similar reasons. Most of all, I have worried as to whether we've made a real connection between what the PHOTINT and SIGINT people are doing in HUMINT.

There is no question that whether this or any other philosophy is a correct one, we have lots to do to get the Collection Tasking Staff pulling together within itself and working closely with RMS. I am pleased that you think Zeke is a good one for doing this-- I certainly do also, and he is off to a good start. I'll discuss your ideas with him and we'll decide on the best mix of any organizational changes and then just good management and leadership. Between these, I think we'll see things shape up quickly. After all, in part, the problems we have been facing have been the resistance of the established organizations to anything new. Bureaucrats, as you well know, always look on new organizations as a threat. In part, too, it has been a matter of shakedown. I believe, for instance, that the collection summaries that the NITOs produce are valuable, but also will be much more valuable when we have a basic inventory of them on hand. That's an investment that just takes time to accumulate.

Again, I do appreciate your thoughtfulness and helpfulness. I'll keep your thoughts in mind as we move ahead.

Hope you are enjoying retirement--we miss you.

Yours,



STANSFIELD TURNER

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